

## **Psychology 280**

### **APA Style Checklist for Research Proposal & Final Paper**

Below are general guidelines for your final paper. Additional guidelines are found in lecture notes, the Cozby text or the APA Manual (5<sup>th</sup> Edition).

#### **General Typing and Organization (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ 1" margins all around
- ✓ The parts of the report are in the correct order
- ✓ Double-space throughout the report
- ✓ Each page has a manuscript page header and page number (except figures pages)
- ✓ Five-pace paragraph indents throughout the main body of the report
- ✓ Typed all the title and headings in the upper and lowercase letters (except the running head)
- ✓ Entire document has been checked for spelling and grammatical errors
- ✓ Paper is written in the third person, trying to avoid personal pronouns such as "I," "we," "our"

#### **Title Page (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ Try for a title 15 words or less
- ✓ Title, your name and your institutional affiliation are centered on the page
- ✓ Running head no longer than 50 characters, including spaces

#### **Abstract (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ Abstract headed by centered word "Abstract"
- ✓ Abstract 100 to 150 words in length
- ✓ First line of abstract not indented

#### **Introduction Section (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ Introduction is headed by the paper's title, not by the word "Introduction"
- ✓ All reference citations complete, accurate and correctly formatted
- ✓ The introduction section moves from general to specific.
  - The introduction begins with a general statement about the area being studied
  - The literature review moves from general to more specific references related to the topic of the current paper
  - After the literature review, the introduction section ends with the study's purpose followed by the hypothesis
- ✓ The Introduction section is written in past tense

#### **Method Section (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ The method section follows immediately after the end of the introduction
- ✓ The method section is headed by the centered word "Method"
- ✓ The method section is organized into subsections (e.g. Subjects, Procedure, etc.)
- ✓ The titles for the subsections are underlined (e.g. Subjects )
- ✓ Titles for the subsections are flush with left margins
- ✓ Method section is written in the past tense

#### **Results Section (Final Paper)**

- ✓ The results section follows immediately after the end of the method section
- ✓ The method section is headed by the centered word "Results"
- ✓ If appropriate, the results section is organized into subsections using underlined margin headings
- ✓ If interactions are discussed, the independent variables are capitalized when linked by an X (e.g. Time by Difficulty interaction)
- ✓ Proper form is used for the insertion of tables and figures in the appropriate place

### **Discussion Section (Final Paper)**

- ✓ Discussion section begins immediately after the end of the results section
- ✓ Discussion section is headed by the centered word "Discussion"
- ✓ Past tense is used to describe the results and to refer to other research cited in the introduction
- ✓ Present used to discuss theories, speculations, conclusions
- ✓ Future tense used to suggest additional research which could further the present state of knowledge
- ✓ Discussion section is written from specific to general
  - The Discussion begins immediately by stating if the results did or did not support your hypothesis
  - Then goes on to relate your findings to similar studies cited in the introduction
  - Then goes on to describe design features or procedures which would have improved the present study if you could do it over
  - Then goes on to suggest further research
- ✓ Citations are formatted properly

### **Reference Section (Research Proposal/Final Paper)**

- ✓ Reference sections begins on a new page
- ✓ The reference page is headed by the centered word "References"
- ✓ References are listed in alphabetical order by first author's last name
- ✓ Each author's first and middle name is in initials followed by a period, not spelled out (e.g. Smith, R. J.)
- ✓ Each reference begins at the left margin
- ✓ Subsequent lines within each reference are indented three spaces from the left
- ✓ The correct reference format is used for each citation

### **Tables (Final Paper)**

- ✓ Do either a Table or a Figure for your final paper
- ✓ Each table is typed on a separate page
- ✓ Each table has a manuscript page header and a page number
- ✓ Each table is numbered consecutively according to its order in the results section of the report
- ✓ Each table is identified by the heading "Table" and a number, typed flush with the left margin of the table
- ✓ Each table has a concise title located between the heading "Table" and the table itself
- ✓ Each table title is underlined
- ✓ The first letter of each word in the title is capitalized (except for prepositions, etc.)
- ✓ All lines within the table are at least double-spaced
- ✓ In the body of the table, each column has a heading
- ✓ All lines in the table are horizontal (there should be no vertical lines)

### **Figures (Final Paper)**

- ✓ Do either a Table or a Figure for your final paper
- ✓ The figure caption list is typed on a separate page
- ✓ The figure caption page is headed by the centered title "Figure Caption" if only one figure or "Figure Captions" if two or more figures are included in the results
- ✓ The figure caption page has a manuscript page header and a page number
- ✓ Each figure is drawn on a separate page
- ✓ Each figure is numbered consecutively, corresponding to its order in the results
- ✓ Lines are drawn perfectly straight using a ruler, graphing paper or a computer program
- ✓ The independent variable is on the horizontal axis, the dependent variable on the vertical axis
- ✓ The units on each axis are labeled and spaced equally
- ✓ If appropriate, a legend is used to identify the lines in the graph